

JRTC & Fort Polk



Leader Counseling Guide

Index

NCO Pride	3
Leadership	4
Training	5
Soldier and Family Well-being.....	6
Safety	9
Standards and Discipline	10
Counseling	12
Meeting under the Pine Tree	22
Tools to Use	28
The NCO Creed	31
Charge of the NCO	32
Soldier's Creed	33
Notes.....	34

Summary

This publication supplements and reinforces policy on Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) duties, responsibilities, and conduct.

Applicability This publication applies to all US Army active, Army Reserve , and Army National Guard NCOs serving at JRTC & Ft Polk and TRO, and partner units.

References

- *AR 600-9, The Army Weight Control Program
- *AR 600-20, Army Command Policy
- *AR 670-1, Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia
- *DA Pamphlet 385-1, Small Unit Safety Officer/ NCO Guide
- *FM 7-1, Battle Focused Training
- *FM 7-22.7, The Army Noncommissioned Officer Guide

Purpose

- *Provide NCOs with a clear guide that outlines specific duties and responsibilities that may need special emphasis.
- *This guide is not a stand-alone document; it supplements established standards and regulations.

General

You are an NCO 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, both in and out of uniform, and on and off duty. You are the backbone of our Army. You should be proud of who you are and what you do. You must ensure that your Soldiers and unit are ready, no matter what the mission.

Areas of Emphasis

- *NCO Pride
- *Leadership
- *Training
- *Soldier and Family Well-Being
- *Safety
- *Standards and Discipline
- *Counseling
- *Pine Tree Counseling Methodology

Goal

To enhance and strengthen a proud, cohesive, well trained NCO Corps in the United States Army, and units stationed at Fort Polk, Louisiana.

NCO Pride

- *Know the NCO Creed and require your NCOs to know it; hold NCOs accountable to the standard. Embrace the Soldier's Creed and Warrior Ethos. Every NCO and Soldier, regardless of career field, is a warrior. We must live, lead, and train accordingly.
- *Set the example in appearance, conduct, and performance.
- *Seek to reach excellence; do not settle for achieving minimum or average standards. Lead from the front!
- *Know and understand the concepts in FM 7-1, Battle Focused Training; and FM 7- 22.7, The Army Noncommissioned Officer Guide. These documents outline how we are to train and operate.
- *Promote the prestige and honor of the NCO Corps.
- *Conduct NCO induction ceremonies and make junior Soldiers aspire to be an NCO.
- *Do not allow anyone to refer to or address NCOs and Soldiers by pay grade (for example, E5, E6, E7). To do so denigrates the NCO Corps and our junior Soldiers. Show respect for all enlisted ranks.
- *Train subordinate NCOs at every opportunity, whether in the classroom, field, or motor pool. Coach, teach, and mentor Soldiers daily.

*Maintain a leader's book. This book must include personnel information, the company mission essential task list (METL), training calendar, and individual training data and assessments.

Leadership

Leadership is influencing people by providing purpose, motivation, and direction while operating to accomplish the mission and improve the organization. A leader's job is not easy. A leader is never off duty. A leader is on duty twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Remember, Soldiers are always watching. Leading by example is a powerful way to influence others and is the reason leadership starts with a foundation of the Army Values and the Warrior Ethos. Serving as a role model requires a leader to display character, confidence, and competence to inspire others to succeed. You must speak with your own voice when giving orders - don't show favoritism. You must now promote the culture of the Army. This means that you enforce the Army's standards of good order and discipline. You are no longer one of the troops. This is especially true for your former peers. You must treat each Soldier the same and give him/her the respect that he/she deserves. Remember that you are now responsible and accountable for your Soldiers. The Army expects total commitment from those who are

selected to lead, train and care for its Soldiers. It is an honor and a privilege to lead America's finest men and women during peacetime and at war. Never forget this awesome responsibility. Army values, the NCO Charge, and the NCO Creed each provide guidance and inspiration to lead from the front. Live each and every day by the NCO Creed and include it in your daily business. The NCO Creed will help you through tough times and situations.

The definition contains three basic goals: to lead others, to develop the organization and its individual members, and to accomplish the mission. These goals are extensions of the Army's strategic goal of remaining relevant and ready through effective leadership.

Leading is all about influencing others. Leaders and commanders set goals and establish a vision, and then must motivate or influence others to pursue the goals. Leaders influence others in one of two ways. Either the leader and followers communicate directly, or the leader provides an example through everyday actions.

Training

*All NCOs are responsible for training.

Train for war! Train to high standards under tough conditions.

*You are responsible for individual and crew, squad,

and section training.

- *Conduct combat focused physical training (PT) that challenges Soldiers and prepares them for combat.
- *Conduct opportunity training whenever possible, both in the field and in garrison.
- *Conduct basic and advanced Marksmanship Training, to include Close Combat Marksmanship, and Reflexive Fire.
- *Become an expert in Weapons Immersion and PMI. This will help keep your Soldiers and teams qualified.
- *Use the eight Troop Leading procedures and become and proficient in all Warrior Tasks and Drills.
- *Know your unit's METL and the Next Higher command's METL.

Soldier and Family Well-Being

Taking care of Soldiers is "Sergeant's Business." If the Soldier is married, then ensure that we take care of their Family. There are vast resources available on Fort Polk to assist Soldiers and their Families. This includes the Army Community Services (ACS). The ACS is our local Family service center, which provides programs and services to assist in developing and maintaining skills to confidently meet the demands of being a Soldier or a military Family. Fort Polk has Soldier and Family Life

Consultants. This is a FREE and confidential service available to Soldiers, spouses and their children. The consultants are here to listen and identify recourses available to help cope with the complexities of military life. They are experienced in areas such as: relationship issues, single parenting issues, anger and crisis management, relocation issues, and financial concerns.

Financial Readiness

This service provides personal financial management education. Classes are available in banking, check book management, budget planning and record keeping, debt liquidation, consumers' rights and obligations, and a host of other services. Place the highest priority on solving your Soldiers' pay problems; involve the NCO Support Channel when needed. Military One Source is an excellent web site for financial recourses. By accessing this site, Soldiers can:

- *Reach your goals. Written goals shared with others are more likely to be reached.
- *Get out of debt faster or save more money. People with written plans save twice as much money as people who don't have written plans.
- *Become informed. Membership benefits include a free quarterly electronic newsletter, access to other

wealth-building information, and savings and debt reduction tips.

*Make a difference. You can help establish a financially fit fighting force by building personal wealth through saving.

Important Numbers and Web Sites

ACS.....	531-1941
Family Readiness.....	531-9426
Military Family Life Consultant.....	531-1941
OneSource.....	1-800-342-9647
Red Cross.....	531-4783 (after hours emergencies 877-272-7337)
Social Work Services.....	531-3272
Tri-Care.....	1-800-444-5445
Youth Services.....	531-6907

ACS web Page.... <http://www.jrtc-polk.army.mil/ACS/index.htm>

Military One Source..... www.militaryonesource.com

Ensure sponsors provide first class sponsorship to both newly assigned/departing Soldiers and their families. Greet and care for newly assigned Soldiers on their arrival into the unit. This includes after duty hours and on weekends and holidays. Leaders will welcome and brief them within hours after their arrival. During after-duty hours, routinely check on your Soldiers who live in the barracks.

Ensure deserving Soldiers receive recognition awards before they depart. Verify that the SGLI, DD Form 93, ID card, TRICARE and DEERS system are updated and accurate for your Soldiers and their families. Do not tolerate spouse or child abuse or sexual harassment. If these occur, take immediate action and report it to the chain of Command. Take care of your Soldiers and families at all times.

Safety

Every Soldier is a safety officer, do not allow unsafe practices. Incorporate the Composite Risk Management (CRM) process into everything that you do. CRM broadens the scope of safety to prevent accidental injury or death.

- *Integrate CRM into all phases of missions and whether on or off duty.

- *Identify the hazards

- *Assess the hazards

- *Develop controls and make risk decisions (at the appropriate level)

- *Implement controls

- *Supervise and evaluate

Set the example in everything that you do on or off duty.

Always wear your seatbelt, do not speed, and do not drink and drive.

- *Require ground guides when backing any vehicle.
- *Enforce the Army's policy for motorcycle riders to wear complete Protective Equipment while riding and check your Soldiers for appropriate documentation (license, insurance, and Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) qualification).
- *Conduct daily safety huddles with your Soldiers and enforce the "Pine Tree" counseling methodology prior to any period of absence including leaves or passes.
- *Use the CRC's TRIPS (travel risk planning system) Assessment. It is located at:
<https://crc.army.mil/home/>.
 Bottom line safety first, do the right things all the time and keep your Soldiers alive!

Standards and Discipline

- *Conduct daily in-ranks inspections.
- *Ensure Soldiers meet height, weight, and appearance standards.
- *Ensure the beret is worn correctly and worn with pride.
- *Ensure uniforms are clean, serviceable, and worn correctly.
- *Make on the spot corrections in a tactful, professional manner.
- *Correct offensive or vulgar language, loud music, and inappropriate clothing worn by Soldiers.

*Require Soldiers to sing the Army Song at ceremonies and special events.

*Correct Soldiers who are wearing unauthorized piercings when on any Army installations or other places under Army Control. This includes male Soldiers who are wearing earrings on post.

*Conduct opportunity training whenever possible, both in the field and in garrison.

*Set the example in personal conduct during off duty hours.

*Seek to prevent hot-weather and cold-weather injuries before they occur.

*Require hearing and eye protection when needed.

*Soldiers and subordinate NCOs will assume the position of “Parade Rest” when addressing senior NCOs, and the position of “Attention” when addressing officers. Salute officers in official vehicles (recognized by rank or identifying vehicle plates or flags).

*Soldiers will give the unit motto when saluting officers and when greeting senior NCOs. Additional guidance of standards for Fort Polk can be found in the JRTC & Fort Polk Soldier’s Handbook. Also, familiarize yourself with the policy letters of the installation. These can be found on the Fort Polk intranet.

Counseling

- *Counsel junior enlisted Soldiers monthly.
- *Counsel NCOs quarterly.
- *Focus on future goals and future training, not past performance.
- *Counsel all Soldiers on their promotion status and potential.

Counseling and Communication

In order for a leader to be effective, he/she must understand the art of communication. The key to effective communication is to come to a common or shared understanding. Listening sometimes is more important than speaking. Leaders must be able to talk with, not to, their Soldiers. Counseling is a basic responsibility of every leader and an important part of taking care of Soldiers and their Families. Families are part of the Army team. If a Soldier is concerned about problems with his/her Family, the overall mission will suffer. Counseling responsibilities range from holding scheduled, structured counseling sessions to reacting to problem situations as they occur by giving on the spot guidance.

One of the most effective corrective measures is on-the-spot correction. Use this tool for making the quick and effective corrections to deficiencies in training or standards. Generally, there is one of two reasons a Soldier requires an on-the spot correction. Either the Soldier you are correcting does not know what the standard is or knows the standard, but does not care what the standard is.

If the Soldier does not know what the standard is, educate him/her. If the Soldier was aware of the standard but chooses not to adhere to it, this may indicate a larger problem that his chain of command should address. In such a situation you might consider developmental counseling. Developmental counseling is categorized by the purpose of the session. There are three major categories of developmental counseling. They are Event counseling, Performance counseling and Professional growth counseling. (More on these types of counseling can be found in FM 6-22 appendix B).

To best understand the value of counseling, it is best to first understand its definition. Counseling is a type of communication that leaders use to empower Soldiers to achieve goals. It is much more than providing feedback or direction. It is communication aimed at developing a Soldier's ability to achieve individual and unit goals. Soldiers want to be counseled and will respond to counseling because they want to know what it takes to be successful in today's Army. Regardless of your leadership position, your Soldiers see you as successful, simply because you have achieved the level they are striving to accomplish. Leaders must provide each of their Soldiers with the best possible road map to success. This is done through counseling. Today's leadership doctrine incorporates this definition in subordinate-centered communication, which leads to the achievement of individual and unit goals.

When you as the leader don't counsel, you are derelict in your duties as first line supervisor, trainer, and mentor. The leader has the responsibility to assess subordinates' leadership performance, provide feedback, and help them overcome weaknesses and achieve maximum growth. When there is no counseling, subordinates are forced to second-guess leaders' expectations, two way communication becomes hindered and standards are not met. There are many different approaches to counseling. The directive, nondirective, and combined approaches offer a variety of options that can suit any subordinates and situation.

Stage 1: Identify The Need For Counseling

Usually organizational policies (such as counseling associated with an evaluation or command directed counseling) focus a counseling session. However, leaders may also conduct developmental counseling whenever the need arises for focused, two-way communication aimed at subordinate's development. Developing subordinates consists of observing the subordinate's performance, comparing it to the standard, and then providing feedback to the subordinate in the form of counseling.

Stage 2: Prepare For Counseling

Successful counseling requires preparation in the following seven areas:

- *Select a suitable place.
- *Schedule the time.
- *Notify the subordinate well in advance.
- *Organize information.
- *Outline the counseling session components.
- *Plan the counseling strategy.
- *Establish the right atmosphere.

Establish the Right Atmosphere

The right atmosphere promotes open, two-way communication between a leader and subordinate.

To establish a more relaxed atmosphere, offer the subordinate a seat or a cup of coffee. If appropriate, choose to sit in a chair facing the subordinate since a desk can act as a barrier.

Some situations require more formal settings. During counseling to correct substandard performance, leaders seated behind a desk may direct the subordinate to remain standing. This reinforces the leader's role and authority and underscores the severity of the situation.

Stage 3: Conduct The Counseling Session

Caring Army leaders use a balanced mix of formal and informal counseling and learn to take advantage of everyday events to provide subordinates with feedback. Counseling opportunities often appear when leaders encounter subordinates in their daily activities in the field, motor pool, barracks, and wherever else Soldiers and civilians perform their duties. Even during ad-hoc counseling, leaders should address the four basic components of a counseling session:

- *Open the session.
- *Discuss the issues.
- *Develop a plan of action.
- *Record and close the session.

Open the Session

In the session opening, the leader counselor states the purpose and establishes a subordinate-centered setting.

The counselor establishes an atmosphere of shared purpose by inviting the subordinate to speak.

An appropriate purpose statement might be “SFC Taylor, the purpose of this counseling is to discuss your duty performance over the past month and to create a plan to enhance performance and attain performance goals.” If applicable, start the counseling session by reviewing the status of the current plan of action.

Discuss the Issues

Leader and counseled individual should attempt to develop a mutual and clear understanding of the counseling issues. Use active listening and invite the subordinate to do most of the talking. Respond and ask questions without dominating the conversation but help the subordinate better understand the subject of the counseling session: duty performance, a problem situation and its impact, or potential areas for growth. To reduce the perception of bias or early judgment, both leader and subordinate should provide examples or cite specific observations. When the issue is substandard performance, the leader must be clear why the performance did not meet the standard. During the discussion, the leader must clearly establish what the subordinate must do to meet the standard in the future. *It is very important that the leader frames the issue at hand as substandard performance and prevents the subordinate from labeling the issue as an unreasonable standard.*

Develop a Plan of Action

A plan of action identifies a method and pathway for achieving a desired result. It specifies what the subordinate must do to reach agreed-upon goals set during the counseling session. The plan of action must be specific, showing the subordinate how to modify or maintain his or her behavior. Example: “PFC Miller, next week you’ll attend the map reading class with 1st Platoon. After the class, SGT Dixon will personally coach you through the land navigation course. He will help you develop your skills with the compass. After observing you going through the course with SGT Dixon, I will meet with you again to determine if you still need additional training.”

Record and Close the Session

Although requirements to record counseling sessions vary, a leader always benefits from documenting the main points of a counseling session, even the informal ones. Documentation serves as a ready reference for the agreed-upon plan of action and helps the leader track the subordinate’s accomplishments, improvements, personal preferences, or problems. A good record of counseling enables the leader to make proper recommendations for professional development, schools, promotions, and evaluation reports.

Army regulations require specific written records of counseling for certain personnel actions, such as barring a Soldier from reenlisting, processing an administrative separation, or placing a Soldier in the overweight program. When a Soldier faces involuntary separation, the leader must maintain accurate counseling records. Documentation of substandard actions often conveys a strong message to subordinates that a further slip in performance or discipline could require more severe action or punishment.

When closing the counseling session, summarize the key points and ask if the subordinate understands and agrees with the proposed plan of action. With the subordinate present, establish any follow-up measures necessary to support the successful implementation of the plan of action. Follow-up measures may include providing the subordinate with specific resources and time, periodic assessments of the plan, and additional referrals. If possible, schedule future meetings before dismissing the subordinate.

Stage 4: Follow-Up Leader Responsibilities

The counseling process does not end with the initial counseling session. It continues throughout the implementation of the plan of action, consistent with the observed results. Sometimes, the initial plan of action will require modification to meet its goals. Leaders must consistently support their subordinates in implementing the plan of action by teaching, coaching, mentoring, or providing additional time, referrals, and other appropriate resources. Additional measures may include more focused follow-up counseling, informing the chain of command, and taking more severe corrective measures.

Assess the Plan of Action

During assessment, the leader and the subordinate jointly determine if the desired results were achieved. They should determine the date for their initial assessment during the initial counseling session. The plan of action assessment provides useful information for future follow-up counseling sessions.

Meeting Under The Pine Tree

General

Managing off-duty risk is critical to meeting our goal of No Loss of Life. We must remain decisively engaged in ensuring that Soldiers avoid risky behavior. Before weekends and holidays, and before Soldiers go on pass or leave, first-line Officers and Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs) will give a composite risk briefing, and first-line NCOs or supervisors will meet with each Soldier to discuss the Soldier's off-duty plans.

This process ensures that leaders are aware of their Soldiers' plans and have made a mutual, verbal contract on the steps to be taken to manage identified risks. The intent of this policy applies equally to Soldiers managed by civilians.

NOTE: In no way does the Pine Tree counseling methodology replace any other counseling requirement. It is used with other counseling requirements to assist in Soldier safety.

Meeting “Under the Pine Tree”

Meeting Under the Pine Tree is the road to success. This refined, back-to-basics initiative shows our commitment as leaders and is truly “taking care of Soldiers.” The Meeting Under the Pine Tree requirement complements and must be used with individual risk assessments. This is not intended to be a paperwork meeting and written records of the meeting are not necessary or desired. The meeting is intended to be a leader-to-led meeting with face-to face, Soldier-to-Soldier guidance given and a verbal “safe behavior” contract agreed to. Meeting Under the Pine Tree ensures that the first-line leader or supervisor is able to make a verbal contract with the Soldier in which the Soldier agrees to take steps to mitigate risks identified in the assessment.

Soldiers who plan to drive a car or ride a motorcycle on a trip during the period under review and their first line leaders must pass additional gates. For each trip they make, Soldiers and their leader will discuss in detail their plan and distance of the trip, identify possible risks and “what if scenarios” and will complete the online United States Army Combat Readiness Center (USACRC) The Travel Risk Planning System (TRiPS) Privately

Owned Vehicle (POV) module. They will agree on specific and individual control measures to mitigate the identified risks and agree on a verbal contract to follow the control measures. This is a good tool and can be of real benefit to all Soldiers. If access to the USACRC website is not available, Soldiers may use a locally generated POV Risk Assessment module.

TRiPS

The Travel Risk Planning System (TRiPS) is an online, automated risk-management tool that leverages known POV accident hazard information and provides targeted information to help make practical, informed decisions. The TRiPS POV module is intended for use by POV drivers traveling outside the local area on pass, leave, temporary duty, or permanent change of station. The tool calculates a numerical risk based on the answers to questions, such as the trip start-point and destination, the type of vehicle to be used, the amount of sleep the previous night, and so on. Responses are compared to accidents in the Army database and relevant accident summaries are provided for review. Users are shown areas where better choices can reduce their risk level. Finally, a risk level is determined after applying risk-mitigation fundamentals.

Using the System

Before beginning, users must know their Army Knowledge Online (AKO) login and password, and their leader's e-mail address. Available online at https://crcapps2.crc.army.mil/ako_auth/TRiPS/register.aspx Users must enter their AKO user name and password to reach the TRiPS Risk Assessment Tool selection screen, at which they can choose the POV tool.

Supervisors can view risk assessments completed by their subordinates by selecting View risk assessments for your subordinates. When TRiPS is not available, Soldiers may use the Individual Travel Assessment Worksheet.

Basic Responsibilities.

First-line Officers and senior NCOs are responsible for conducting unit composite risk-management briefings.

First-line NCOs are responsible for:

- *Knowing the Soldier.
- *Reviewing risks associated with their Soldier's activities.
- *Considering the range of composite risk management factors and asking pointed questions to determine risks.
- *Considering the unit risk-reduction profile.
- *Providing advice and counsel on risk mitigation.
- *Making a Go or No Go decision on the plan. NCOs will not allow Soldiers to go on pass or leave until they are satisfied that the risks have been identified and sufficiently mitigated, and the Soldier and NCO have made a verbal contract as to how to mitigate the risks.
- *Holding the Soldier appropriately accountable for his or her actions.

The Soldier is responsible for:

- *Making required assessments before the meeting.
- *Openly discussing plans and associated risks for the period under review.
- *Abiding by the verbal contract and following the risk-assessment and risk-management process as conditions affect the contract.

The Soldier and the NCO are jointly responsible for:

- *Making a mutual agreement and executing a verbal “safe behavior” contract covering courses of action for the period under review, and any contingency plans. This is the verbal contract.
- *Completing their obligations TRiPS.

Battalion leaders are responsible for:

- *Verifying the integrity of this process and ensuring that subordinate leaders and Soldiers adhere to safety standards.

Under the Pine Tree Counseling Example

It is Thursday afternoon, SGT Jones plans on taking seven days leave to visit family. SFC Wilson talks with SGT Jones about his travel plans.

SGT Jones: “SFC Wilson, I plan on driving to Corpus Christi to see my family. I will leave about 0500 and not arrive until about 2000.”

SFC Wilson: “So you are planning to drive 15 hours straight. (*Red Flag Goes Up!*) Will you be traveling with another driver? And how many planned stops do you have?

SGT Jones:

“My wife will drive at least half of the trip. We plan on changing over at every two and a half hours. We will also visit some friends for an hour and have lunch in Northern Texas.”

SFC Wilson: “What are your plans if your car breaks down? Is your DA 31 signed and has your POV been inspected? Your TRiPS Risk assessment was a Moderate. What risks did that system identify and what are your risk mitigation measures?”

SGT Jones: “The amount of time was a factor, and my wife and I will drive and take frequent stops to reduce those risks. If I break down I have a emergency fund for those situations.”

This dialogue is continued until the Supervisor is satisfied that the Soldier is ready. After the supervisor is confident that the Soldier has mitigated risks, a verbal contract is made between the supervisor and the Soldier. The contract is a verbal agreement that the Soldier will adhere to all risk mitigating steps necessary to keep him/her safe over the course of the off duty time in review. The supervisor can even call to see if the trip is going well and Soldier is following through with his plans.

Tools to use

A holiday weekend, leave or pass is pending for a Soldier. If the Soldier is driving have him/her complete the TRiPS. If the internet is not available, or the TRiPS is down, have the Soldier complete the Individual Travel Assessment Worksheet. If the TRiPS was used the supervisor will receive notification in his/her AKO email account. At that point, the supervisor logs into TRiPS and reviews the subordinate's risk assessment. The supervisor then uses this assessment to counsel the subordinate "Under the Pine Tree". Meanwhile the subordinate attends the unit safety briefing and then schedules a "Meeting Under the Pine Tree" with his/her supervisor. At the meeting under the pine tree, the supervisor and the Soldier, together, execute composite risk management (wellness, health, safety, finance, physical security, force protection, sexual misconduct and other areas) as necessary. The two think of "what if" scenarios, ie. flat tire-costs you 4 hours-don't try to push it to 19 hours, driving to 0200. They discuss risks and countermeasures in detail. The Soldier must be honest and open about his/her plans, seek advice and give thought in detail about his/her plans. The supervisor must be open and give advice, ask pointed questions about the subordinate's plans. And finally be prepared to disapprove the plan if necessary. The idea is to come to a mutual satisfaction that the plan is suitable. If the plan is not suitable, the supervisor will have the subordinate modify the plan, create an alternate plan, or if necessary abandon the plan altogether. After necessary alterations to the plan are made, the supervisor and the subordinate make a verbal contract.

Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer

No one is more professional than I. I am a Noncommissioned Officer, a leader of Soldiers. As a Noncommissioned Officer, I realize that I am a member of a time honored corps, which is known as "The Backbone of the Army."

I am proud of the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers and will at all times conduct myself so as to bring credit upon the Corps, the Military Service and my country regardless of the situation in which I find myself. I will not use my grade or position to attain pleasure, profit, or personal safety.

Competence is my watch-word. My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind, accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my Soldiers. I will strive to remain tactically and technically proficient. I am aware of my role as a Noncommissioned Officer. I will fulfill my responsibilities inherent in that role. All Soldiers are entitled to outstanding leadership; I will provide that leadership. I know my Soldiers and I will always place their needs above my own. I will communicate consistently with my Soldiers and never leave them uninformed. I will be fair and impartial when recommending both rewards and punishment. Officers of my unit will have maximum time to accomplish their duties; they will not have to accomplish mine. I will earn their respect and

confidence as well as that of my Soldiers. I will be loyal to those with whom I serve; seniors, peers and subordinates alike. I will exercise initiative by taking appropriate action in the absence of orders. I will not compromise my integrity, nor my moral courage. I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, Noncommissioned Officers, leaders!

Charge to the Noncommissioned Officer

I will discharge carefully and diligently the duties of the grade to which I have been promoted and uphold the traditions and standards of the Army. I understand that Soldiers of lesser rank are required to obey my lawful orders. Accordingly, I accept responsibility for their actions. As a Noncommissioned Officer, I accept the charge to observe and follow the orders and directions given by supervisors acting according to the laws, articles and rules governing the discipline of the Army, I will correct conditions detrimental to the readiness thereof. In so doing, I will fulfill my greatest obligation as a leader and thereby confirm my status as a Noncommissioned Officer.

Soldier's Creed

I am an American Soldier.

I am a Warrior and a member of a team.

I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.

I will always place the mission first.

I will never accept defeat.

I will never quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade.

I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills. I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.

I am an expert and I am a professional.

I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.

I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.

I am an American Soldier.

“There has never been a good army without a good noncommissioned officer corps.”

General Bruce C. Clarke

Notes

